

HANDOUT 4.2 — METHODS OF RESOLVING CONFLICT

Avoidance: The person avoids the problem and will not talk about it. The problem will not go away.

Smoothing: One person agrees to give in to the other. This may lead to problems in the future.

Use of authority: One person invokes his/her superior position to get their way. Often leads to problems in the future.

Force: One person threatens to use/uses physical violence to get his/her way. Leads to future problems.

Compromise: Each person agrees to give up something so that the conflict can be solved. The people may, however, still be unhappy and this can lead to problems in the future.

Arbitration: Both parties agree to abide by the judgment of a third party.

Follow rules and regulations: Both parties agree to abide by a predetermined set of rules.

Confrontation: One person sees the conflict as a competition that he or she must win. This can lead to further problems.

Consensus: Both parties agree that one of them is right. However, one of them is usually still unhappy. Behavioral changes: One party agrees to change his/her behavior to reduce the conflict. Problems usually arise further down the line.

Negotiation or Problem solving: Both people decide to work out the best solution that makes them both happy. This is the only long-lasting solution.

- **Negotiation** provides parties with an **opportunity to define issues** that are important to them.
- **Negotiation** provides parties with an **opportunity to understand** each other's interests and concerns.
- **Negotiation** provides an **opportunity to achieve better, more widely accepted decisions.**

Source: Hinkey, L. and Engleby, Laura (instructors/editors). 2002. Navigating in Rough Seas: Public Policy Issues and Conflict Management. NOAA Coastal Services Center.